

The Efficiency
OF
GODS GRACE
In Bringing
GAIN-SAYING SINNERS
TO
CHRIST:
A SERMON

Preached at *Summerford* in *Wiltshire*,
At the Funerall of that Pious and Worthy
young Gentleman, Mr ROBERT STRANGE.
With a Narrative of his short but wellspent Life.

By SIMEON ASHE Preacher of the Gospel at *London*.

*The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have
loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-
kindnesse have I drawn thee. JER. 31. 3.*

*The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion, rule
thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing
in the day of thy power. P S A. 110. 2, 3.*

L O N D O N,

Printed by *A. M.* for *G. Sawbridge* at the Signe of the Bible
on Ludgate-hill near Fleet-bridge. 1654.

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To the Right Worshipfull, and much Honoured
Good Lady, the Lady
MARGARET HUNGERFORD.

Madam,



Our Ladiships Invitation carried me to
visit your Nephew M^r *Robert Strange*
in the time of his last Sicknesse, that I
might be serviceable to his precious
Soul. The chief of our Discourse was
concerning Christ who is both in life and death the
Christians most needed and only satisfying advantage.
His heart being affected upon our conference with the
apprehensions both of the worth of Christ and the dif-
ficulty of right closing with him, did pitch his
thoughts and discourse upon those weighty words of
our Saviour, *No man can come unto me, except the Father*
which hath sent me draw him. Upon this account when
God had translated him by death, and his Funerall
was resolved upon, your Ladiship did not only design
me to preach, but did also desire me to deal upon this
Text, that the way and method of God, in drawing
sinners to Christ, might be laid open for the edification
of the Auditory; The Sermon being accordingly
preached, and I yeelding (upon what importunity
your Ladiship remembreth) to prepare it for the Press,
have made bold to dedicate it to your Ladiship, as a
Testimony of my thankfulness for all your favours.
Madam, God hath exercised you with mixtures of

providence; As he hath dealt bountifully with you, in trusting you with a full estate, so that he might moderate your affections towards sublunaries, he hath taken from you the comfort of many near Relations, much better then wealth; first by the death of your Honoured Husband God plucked from you one half of your self, and since by sundry strokes he hath taken away divers others near unto you both by consanguinity and affinity, who did lie near unto your heart. Madam, all these dispensations are demonstrations of the fading vanity of all creatures, and should be arguments to perswade the ensuring of Christ, in whom spiritually all Relations are enjoyed, and who virtually is infinitely better then all things under the Sun; God hath not only given your Ladiship convictions, but also some experience of the durable, incomparable sweetnesse which is in Christ, and from hence you have received refreshing in times of sorrow: O blesse God therefore more and more in heart and life, for drawing your soul into any acquaintance and communion with him, who is *the consolation of Israel*. By improving Christ you shall gain support under every grievance, comfort in every sorrow, the best companion in places of solitarinesse, and soul-satisfaction for evermore. Madam, If this Sermon shall add any thing to your soul-edification in guiding and encouraging your frequent fiduciall applications to Christ, I shall rejoyce and blesse the Lord.

Madam, I am


Aug. 7. 1654.

Your Ladiships humble Servant,

SIMMON ASHER.



To Robert Foselin, John Foyle, Richard
Southbye Esquires, and Brothers in Law to
Robert Strange Esquire, deceased; as also to
their Wives his endeared Sisters.

 Our near Relations and dear Affections to-
wards your worthy Brother, caused this
Sermon (Preached at his Funerall) to be
the more moving upon your hearts; and
hence issued your prevailing importunity to
have it printed, both for your future use and the pre-
serving of his memory, whose Name is precious amongst
all who had acquaintance with him. Herein according
to my promise I have gratified your desires, and shall
heartily rejoyce if through Gods blessing the Sermon
may prove beneficiall unto your souls. Divine Provi-
dence hath by his death made a great addition unto
your outward estate, I beseech you in such sort to ac-
knowledge Gods hand herein, that your love and ser-
viceablenesse to his Majesty, may thereby be increa-
sed. And whereas you know that he made Religion
in

in the practice of it his chief businesse upon earth; be
you carefull to write after this fair Copie, endeavour-
ing in your places and Stations to honour his God, and
to shew your selves faithfull Stewards of that worldly
Estate, and other Talents with which he hath trusted
you, that those who lament the losse of him may have
abundant occasion to blasse the Lord for you, which shall
be the Prayer of

Your unfained Friend,

London, Aug. 7.

1654.

and humble Servant in Christ,

SIMON ASH.

John



JOHN 6. 44.

No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day.



Hese are the words of Jesus Christ, whose authority should move attention, and whose fidelity should win credit unto the weighty Truths to be handled from them.

Two things are notable from the context.

1. The occasion of this assertion,
2. The quality of this inference.

First, This assertion in the Text (which is of very great use) was occasioned by the murmuring of the Jews, at Christs heavenly doctrine, discovering that spirituall satisfying food which Christian souls may finde in him. This appeareth from the foregoing verses.

Hence may be observed,

Ver. 41. 42, 43

That thi sinful cavils of men against holy Truths, make way **Dott.**
for the more clear and full breaking forth of truth. The Scripture doth afford manifold examples hereof.

And the ground hereof is 1. Partly from Christs wisdom.
2. And partly from his care to promote the welfare of his Church; For as in regard of his wisdom he well knoweth how to bring light out of darknesse, and to obviate the Churches disturbances; So in respect unto his peoples profit, both for the present and the future, he will not neglect any opportunity to procure their benefit.

This meditation may administer matter of comfort unto

B

Gods

Use.

Gods faithfull servants in these our broken times, filled both with errors and discontents. Though there be murmurings and animosities against many precious truths, yea, against some sacred Ordinances of Christ, viz. the morality of the Christian Sabbath, the Ordination of Gospel-Ministers, the administration of Church-discipline, &c. yet let us take encouragement to depend upon Christ for the issuing of all for his Churches advantage in his time and way; The striking of flints upon one another which now cause burning sparks, may produce more clear light.

Secondly, For the quality of the inference; My Text is an universall Proposition from a particular instance, viz. upon the murmuring observed amongst the Jews against Christs spirituall, profitable discoveries, whereby they might probably have been rather perswaded to make affectionate approaches unto him; he thereupon infers the assertion in the Text, *No man can come unto me except the Father draw him.* From hence we may note.

Dott.

Pro. 27. 19.

Eph. 2. 2, 3.

V/c.

1 Cor. 4. 7.

That the same wicked waywardnesse in withdrawing from Christ, is indifferently in all the unregenerate children of men; As in water face answereth face, so (saith Solomon) the heart of man to man: And the Apostle telleth the Saints at Ephesus, that in the estate of corrupt nature they were Children of disobedience even as others.

Let none therefore pride themselves in their natural, inbred ingenuity or acquired frameableness to that which is good. Neither let any proudly insult over such who in any kinde seem to be worse disposed then themselves; For the Text doth hint thus much, that every childe of Adam is naturally as averse to Christ, as the Jews themselves were. And the Speech of the Apostle is applicable unto all them who be better disposed; *Who made thee so differ from another? And what hast thou which thou hast not received? Now if thou hast received it why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* Therefore lie low in thine own thoughts of thy self, labouring by reflection to see thine own face in the glasse of the worst heart and life on earth: And blesse free-grace for making thee better then the worst of sinners.

Having

Having thus briefly touched these two Observations from the context, I proceed to the Text, the Subject matter whereof is, *the coming of fallen man unto Jesus Christ*:

Concerning which these particulars are therein notable.

1. The Authour thereof *viz.* God, who is represented under a double Notion; Both Relative, *The Father*: And Authoritative, *viz.* Christs mission as a Mediatour was from him, *Which hath sent me.*

2. The manner of Gods working in bringing Elect sinners unto Christ, *viz.* by a powerfull attraction; *The Father draweth every sinner who cometh to Christ.*

3. The inability of all, even the best of *Adams* depraved posterity, to come unto the Lord Jesus without this forcible power, put forth by the God of Heaven. *No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.*

4. The promise made unto every individuall sinner, who by the strong arm of God is brought unto Christ, *And I will raise him up at the last day.*

No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Hence we may observe,

1. A divine assertion, *No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him.*

2. A precious promise, *And I will raise him up at the last day.*

This second division of the Text, I suggest, because more easie, and may make the way more clear to the several doctrines, which are hence to be handled.

I begin with the Assertion, which is very fruitfull, containing many usefull truths; whereof some are necessarily implied, and others are openly expressed.

Amongst them which are implied, some relate unto God, and others unto man. Those which respect God are these two.

1. *That God is the Father.*

2. *That Christ as Mediatour betwixt God and man was sent by the Father.*

Doff. 1.
ver. 29. 37.

1. *That God is the Father.* This our Saviour often expresseth in this Chapter. *God the Father. All that the Father giveth me.*

For Explication, The comprehensiveness of fatherly relation in God may be considered.

Mal. 2. 10.

1. By Creation, God is the Father of all mankind, *Hav we not all one Father? Hath not one God made us?*

2. In regard of some Providences exercised for the preservation of the Church visible, God is the Father of the members thereof in a more especial manner. In reference unto *Israels* redemption from *Egypt* *Moses* speaketh thus

Deut. 32. 6.

Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee?

3. In a sense more peculiar God is the Father of all true beleevers, both by the right of Regeneration and Adoption *He is the Father of Lights, who hath begotten us by the word of Truth;* And we have received the Spirit of Adoption whereby we cry *Abba, Father.*

Jam. 1. 17. 18.
Rom. 8. 15.

Eph. 1. 3.

Luk. 1. 35.

4. In a way more singular he is the Father of our Lord *Iesus Christ.* As Christ was Gods Son by eternal unexpressible generation, so God was his Father in respect of his miraculous conception. And in this sense the Text and Doctrine are principally to be understood, though the other are not excluded.

Use 1.

The application hereof may be either 1. More generally or 2. More particular.

First, In general. Hence it followeth that more childlike respect is due unto God then unto any Father on earth, yea then unto all Fathers in the world. This I conceive considerable from the mouth of our Saviour himself in this Chapter, wherein he advanceth God the Father above all the forefathers of the Jews, who boasted of their Parentage And this might easily be manifested whether we take notice of the unparalleled worth in himself, or the incomparable advantages received from him. Therefore, whereas much love, honour, fear, and obedience are due unto Fathers upon earth, how much more, in all these kinds is more due unto God.

ver. 38. with 32

Mal. 1. 6.
Lev. 19. 3.
Col. 3. 20.

Use 2.

Secondly, The Point may be applied more particularly according to the severall Notions aforesaid, suggesting in what

what various respects *God is the Father.*

First, Whereas all the members of the Church-visible, yea, all the children of *Adam*, may in some respects account God their Father, therefore they should in this regard.

1. Be the more deeply humbled for sin. This consideration *Moses* casteth into the thoughts of disobedient *Israel*: *Do ye thus requite the Lord ye foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee and established thee?* Deut. 32.6.

2. Be the more abased in themselves, under all the expressions of divine displeasure breaking out against them. Gods answer to *Moses* bewailing leprous *Miriam*, speaketh this inference; *If her Father had spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven daies: Doubtlesse the Lords most gentle rods would not be despised, did we seriously minde him, either as God or Father, whose hand laeth them on.* Num. 12.14.

3. Be encouraged after sinfull departures from God to return with penitentiall hopes unto him again. When God gave revolting *Israel* the title of children, calling them back again unto himself: their answer spake resolutions to return. *Return ye back sliding children, behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.* And the Prodigall (who representeth the estate of the unconverted sinner) is perswaded to relinquish his riotous way of living, and to make home again by minding him as his Father whom he had formerly forsaken. *I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, make me as one of thy hired Servants.* Jer. 3.21. Luk. 15.18,19

4. Be admonished to take heed of all injurious dealings in your Negotiations amongst men; though by your power or policy you may advantage your selves by crushing them, yet remember that you and they have the same Father, in which regard (as in many others) you should not dare to do the least wrong to the meanest of men. The holy Ghost hath taught people by this argument to resist inclinations unto fraudulent dealings of all kindes; *Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why* Mal. 2.10.

do we deal treacherously every man against his brother ?

Secondly, Whereas Believers and regenerate Christians have a more speciall Relation to God as their Father, therefore upon this account they are to be advised

1. With humble thankfulness highly to prize and heartily to rejoyce in this their great dignity ; *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the Sons of God !* There are two things which do much commend this priviledge, viz. the incomparable worth 1. of the Father. 2. and of the Inheritance. *Seemeth it to you* (saith David) *a light thing to be a Kings Son in Law, seeing that I am a poor man and lightly esteemed ?* Now is not God infinitely higher then the highest amongst men ? And the Apostle Peter commends the inheritance unto which we are begotten again by the Father, telling us that it is *incorruptible, and undefiled, which fadeth not away.* Saint John commends this prerogative of this sweet Relation to God as unto a Father, by both these particulars, in the quotation before pointed at. *Behold now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know, that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

2. To expresse holy patience under the pressure of all afflicting providences whatsoever. *We have had the fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the father of spirits ?* Never did, never shall any Christian suffer so much as our Lord and Saviour endured, and yet this meditation was a means of exemplary contentment and calmnesse unto him. *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it ?*

3. To maintain mutuall love and concord amongst themselves. This is one of the many arguments, whereby Saint Paul perswadeth the Ephesians, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace ; *There is one God and Father of all.* And in like manner Abraham reasoneth with his Nephew Lot ; *Let there be no strife I pray thee between me and thee, for we are Brethren.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Whereas God in a way of transcendant singularity is the Father of Christ, these useful consequences are from hence considerable.

1. That the love of God in giving Christ to be fallermans Mediatour and Peace-maker, was admirably and unspeakably great. The Language of our Saviour himself is notable to this purpose, *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.* So God loved that the greatnesse of his love is beyond expression and comprehension. It is not to be represented by a Masters giving of a Servant, or by a Kings giving of a Favourite, or by a Fathers giving of an ordinary Son; but truly it is love beyond any imaginable parallel, whether we consider, 1. What a Son Christ was to God. 2. Or what a Father God is to Christ. 3. Or what a giving of this Son by this Father was; both in reference to his Incarnation and dolefull passion. But these heads I leave to every Christians meditation. Joh. 3. 16.

Heb. 1. 5.

2. That Gods hatred against sin, and mans misery deserved by sin was marvellous great, seeing Diety could not be pacified, nor humanity saved, by any other means then by the sufferings of him who had God in a way of superlative eminency to be his Father; For doubtlesse God being full of wisdom and love towards his own and only Son, would not, could not, deal more rigorously then justice and holinesse did necessarily require; *When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.* Heb. 10. 5.

3. This is a strong ground of holy confidence unto them who can make out their personal propriety in Christ, seeing God is his Father in a way incomparable. Not intending enlargements I shall only touch two things for comfort upon this account. 1. That hereupon beleevers may boldly expect from the bounty of the Almighty, any thing on earth or in heaven that may conduce unto their advantage, for questionlesse there is nothing terrestriall or celestiall, so much valued by the Father as his own Sonne; *He that spared not his own Sonne how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* Rom. 8. 32.

2. That from hence issueth assurance, that his intercession at

at Gods right hand shall be prevalent in all his undertakings either for this or a better life. *At that day ye shall ask in my Name: I came from the Father and again I go to the Father. The Comforter which is the holy Ghost the Father will send in my Name.*

The second Doctrine implied followeth,

Doct. 2.

That Christ as Mediatour betwixt God and man was sent by the Father. Although this Point doth well deserve a large discourse, yet I shall briefly passe it over, because it lies only in the way to the main truths intended. Our Lord in this Chapter doth often make mention of the Father who sent him.

And this mission of Christ relateth unto the office of Mediatorship in all the parts thereof, as the King, Priest, and Prophet of his Church. Those two Titles of Messiah and Christ, which are ascribed unto him, do hint this truth.

For the Explication of this Doctrine, know that Christ his sending doth comprehend,

Psa. 40. 7.

1. His designation unto the glorious work of Mediatorship by the eternal purpose of God, *In the Volume of thy Book it is written of me.* This was put down in the eternall records of heaven, That Christ should undertake this Office.

Heb. 10. 7.

2. His voluntary acceptation of this great employment: *Then said I, Lo I come to do thy will.*

Mar. 28. 18.
I sa. 61. 1.

3. His sanctification for this high undertaking, wherein we may take notice of the communication, both of authority and fitnesse for this service; *All power is given to me in heaven and earth; The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me* (saith Christ of himself) both by the Spirit of prophecy, and in his own person, applying this Scripture unto himself. *This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.*

Luk. 4. 18, 21.

Joh. 6. 27.
Mat. 3. 17.
& 17. 5.
A. G. 13. 33.

4. His obsequation; *Him hath God the Father sealed.* And the open manifestation of his commission sealed and ratified by the Father was at his Baptism, Transfiguration and Resurrection.

Use. I.

Hence it appeareth, That not Christ alone, but all the three persons of the Trinity, viz. God the Father, and God the

the holy Ghost also, do cooperate in the glorious work of mans Redemption. The Father deputeth Christ to be Mediatour, the Son doth accept of the deputation, and the holy Ghost assisteth Christ in this great undertaking. This I do the rather note, 1. To raise the hearts of Christians to admire and study the knowledge of this famous transaction, wherein all the glorious Persons in the blessed Trinity are co-workers. 2. And to relieve some disconsolate souls who do discourage their fiduciall approaches unto God, partly by conceiving that God the Father is altogether averse to fallen mans recovery, and partly by forgetting the readinesse which is in the holy Ghost, to come in, with assisting grace unto poor penitents, gasping after peace with the Lord through Jesus Christ.

1 Pet. 1. 10, 11,
12.

If Christ did not undertake the work of Mediatorship without a commission granted by the Father, this may be a caution unto them whose proud impetuousnesse doth carry them to adventure upon offices both civill and sacred without any good call from God or men. I heartily wish that this sort of men would well consider the words of the Apostle. *No man taketh this honour unto himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron.* So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High-Priest, but he that said unto him, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* Neither the worthinesse or necessity of the work, nor his ability to manage this Office with good intentions to mankind, carried Christ headlong unto this employment till he was commissioned by the Father.

Use 2.

Heb. 5. 4, 5.

This Doctrine doth administer matter of much confidence and comfort unto them who by faith adventure their souls upon Jesus Christ, seeing he acteth as Mediatour authoritatively and not by usurpation. For from hence they may gather assurance that God the Father is well-pleased with Christs transactions, because himself designed him thereto. And an ingenuous spirit had much rather receive courtesies from lawfully-constituted Authority, then from the power of Usurpers.

Use 3.

Mat. 3. 17.

Thus from these Observations intimated in the Text which

C

relate

relate unto God the Father and Christ his Son. I proceed unto those two collections which are implied in reference unto sinful man.

Doct. 1.

Jer. 3. 22.

That all men in their natural condition are absent and at a distance from Christ. The ground of this Observation is manifest, because coming doth premise absence. This may be cleared by considering Gods call unto *Israel*, *Return ye back sliding children*, compared with their answer, *Behold. we come unto thee.*

Eph. 2. 12.

And the proof of this Point is open in the description which Saint *Paul* giveth of the unregenerate *Ephesians*, whereof this is one part, *At that time ye were without Christ.*

2 Cor. 5. 6.

Act 3. 21.

1 Cor. 1. 2.

Mat. 18. 20.

Isa. 58. 2.

Jer. 12. 2.

Matth. 7. 22.

For the right understanding of this Truth you must know, that this absence from Christ doth not relate, 1. Either unto his humanity, for in that sense Beleevers themselves *when at home in the body are absent from the Lord, whom the heavens must receive until the time of the restitution of all things.* 2. Or unto his Deity which is alwaies every where, in which respect he is present in *every place.* 3. Nor is the doctrine to be understood concerning that presence which Christ promise, where holy Ordinances are dispensed: Into that presence hypocrites do approach, and in that sense they ordinarily come unto him, as *Judas* did. And in regard of their verbal profession *he is near unto the mouths* of men in their natural condition, who shall everlastingly be separated from the presence of his grace in glory.

Rom. 8. 9.

Jer. 11. 2.

Col. 1. 21.

Isa. 53. 1, 3.

But the meaning of the Doctrine is this; That all the children of men in their natural estate are at a distance from Christ, 1. In regard of spirituall Union, being *void of his spirit.* 2. In respect of intire affection, for he is *farre from their reins*; And they are *enemies, having their mindes set upon evil works.* 3. And in point of communion with Christ, because not subdued by his Spirit unto his holy Government.

Use.

Rev. 3. 17.

Psal. 72. 17. &

2. 12.

Therefore all unregenerate persons are *wretched and miserable*, whatsoever their parentage, parts, or priviledges be; for happinesse consists in *having Christ*, therefore all such are unhappy who are without him.

This

This I suggest the rather that I may give a check unto their vanity who extoll the Nature of man, and blesse the morall conversation of Heathens though without Christ. Although I grant that mans body is a curious piece, and his soul is of more worth then the whole world: And though I yeeld that man in respect both of his body and soul may be truly called a *microcosme*, a little world, being the Epitome, the extract of all other creatures; yea, although I acknowledge that persons without the enjoyment of Christ, may be richly beautified with rare acquired endowments, with virtues intellectuall and morall, yet because they are without Christ, therefore without blessednesse; For notwithstanding all their lovely qualifications they are *lothsome*. All their sub-lunary enjoyments are empty *vanities*; All their precious priviledges are *losse, drosse, dung*; And all their best done duties are glittering abominations: These heads I only point at without enlargement. But if any one would more fully be acquainted with the misery of persons not redeemed by grace, and therefore without Christ; Let him consider how much is comprized in those expressions of the Apostle; *At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.*

This being suggested concerning the Christlesse and wo- full condition of all people in the estate of depraved nature, doth make way to the second doctrine.

That there is a necessity of mans coming unto Christ.

If enquiry be made, What it is to come unto Christ, Christ himself returneth answer, that beleeving on him is coming unto him. Let his own words be weighed, *He that cometh unto me shall never hunger, and he that beleeveeth on me shall never thirst*; In this beleeving (which is *heart-work*) the soul, 1. Sets a high value upon Christ; *To you who beleeve he is precious.* 2. And opens it self in gaspings after him, with readinesse to entertain him; Those *receive him who hasten on his Name*: The enlightned heart by the actings of several affections maketh unto Christ, and closeth with him. Desire, love, hope, and joy are the feet whereby the Christians heart

Pla. 139. 14.
Mat. 16. 26.

Ezek. 18. 5.
Eccl. 1. 2.
Vanissima vanitas, Summa vanitas. Vatab.
Phil. 3.
Cruas, ou-
Bada.
Splendida pec-
cata.
IIa. 1. 13. 14.
Eph. 2. 12.

Doct. 20

Joh. 6. 35. 1
Rom. 10. 10.
1 Pet. 2. 7.
Amor, currit per desiderium.
Joh. 1. 12.

Affectibus, non pedibus.

goeth unto Christ. And the necessity which is laid upon all sinners to come unto Christ is double,

*Necessitas præ-
cipi & medij.*

1. As a duty imposed by Gods command.

2. As a means appointed by divine wisdom that Christ may be enjoyed, and that the poor sinner may be saved.

First, How frequent are Scripture-solicitations and injunctions to come unto Christ and (which is all one) to believe on him? The Gospel-Prophet doth double, yea treble his Invitation, *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye, come ye, yea come.* And our Saviour himself spake the same language publicly with expression of much importunity: *In the last and great day of the Feast Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst let him come unto me: And this is Gods commandment that we should beleeve on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ.* Therefore if it be necessary that divine kindenesse be not slighted, nor divine authority disobeyed, then it is necessary that sinners should by faith come unto Christ.

Secondly, Coming unto Christ and believing on him is the condition of the Gospel without which salvation by Christ cannot possibly be enjoyed: This our Saviour is open and expresse in, *All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one who beleeveth may have life everlasting: God gave his only begotten Son that whosoever beleeveth on him should not perish; And ye will not come unto me that ye might have life: How should there be conjunction and communion with Christ except the soul come unto him? Christ is the foundation, and beleevers are built upon him, who therefore must be brought unto him: To whom coming (saith the Apostle Peter) ye also as living stones are built up a spirituall house; And whereas holy fellowship with Christ is held forth under the metaphor of conjugall communion in the Scriptures, as the Book of the Canticles doth abundantly manifest: God brought (at the first Institution of marriage) the woman unto man that he might enjoy her: And in the place where the mystical marriage betwixt Christ and his Church is represented by that conjugal relation betwixt King Solomon and Pharaohs Daughter, we have this expression, *She shall be**

Isa. 55. 1.

Joh. 7. 37.

1 Joh. 3. 23.

Joh. 6. 37, 40.

*Joh. 3. 16. &
5. 40.*

1 Pet. 2. 4. 5.

Gen. 2. 22.

Pla. 45. 14.

be brought unto the King : This might be further illustrated by other Scripture similitudes, suggesting the necessity of the souls approaches unto Christ that it may be happy in him. But I forbear.

The Application followeth.

This Doctrine discovereth the sinfulnesse and sadnesse of their condition who are so far from coming to Christ that they depart farther and farther from Christ, God complaineth when people *revolt more and more* ; And the Apostle speaketh of them who *draw back unto perdition*. In case you demand who do withdraw from Christ? I answer.

Use. 1.

1. Such who turn aside into wries of error, Hereticks are said to *draw away* people from God. Those who deny the Deity of Christ, the divine authority of the holy Scriptures, their obligation to the morall Law, &c. doubtlesse they forsake Christ.

Isa. 1. 5.
Heb. 10. 39.

Aa. 5. 37.

2. And those who give themselves to the satisfaction of any sinful lusts, they are *drawn away*. By *oppression, lying, and other transgressions*, people are said to depart from God. Sinners (through wicked principles) are *estranged from the womb*, and they go astray so soon as they are born. Therefore how wofully do they leave Christ who make an impenitent progresse in sin, whereby he is forsaken more and more.

Jam. 1. 14.
Isa. 59. 13.
Pla. 58. 3.

To perswade people to come unto Christ, as they desire either Gods honour by obeying his call and command or their own welfare in yeelding to the conditions of Gospel grace, without which there is no hope of salvation, as was manifested before in the confirmation of the doctrine. O that I knew what to say further to fetch in souls to Christ.

Use. 2.

1. Consider your own emptinesse and his fulnesse ; The empty belly will come to the storehouse for food ; The bare back will go to the Wardrobe for clothes ; The poor penurious person will make to the Treasury for wealth upon invitation, and encouragement to be supplied. Hearken therefore what Christ saith, *I counsell thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou maist be rich, and white raiment that thou maist be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakednesse may not*

Rev. 3. 18.

appear. Full Barns in *Egypt* called people from all Countreys to come thither for corn: And need at home sendeth men unto the markets for provision.

Rom. 16. 7.

And beleve that as it will be to your comfort so to your credit also to come unto Christ speedily without delay. The Apostle speaks this to the great honour of *Andronicus* and *Junia*, that they were in Christ before himself. And it is recorded to the everlasting commendation of *Mnason* of *Cyprus*, that he was an old Disciple.

Act. 21. 16.

Now if you ask me what you should do that you may come unto Christ? I answer;

*Terminus a quo,
est inde initium
sumit motus.*

Luk. 14. 33.

1. You must relinquish your selves by self-deniall, and by an holy contempt of all creature-contents in comparision of Christ; Weigh well his own words, *Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple.*

*Duo principia
motus cogni-
tio et appetitus.
Isa. 55. 1, 2, 3.
Cant. 5. 10.
with Ch. 6. 1.*

2. You must by the encrease of the knowledge of Christ endeavour to stir up longings after him. This course the Gospel-Prophet took to bring needy souls to Christ, telling them of the *water, milk and wine, with fainesse in abundance* to be had *without money or price*; And hereby the Spouse of Christ prevailed with strangeas, to resolve to look out after him.

Mar. 11. 28, 29

3. You must make unto Christ, as with sorrow for your former estrangements, so with resolutions of future submission unto his government. *Come unto me* (saith Christ) *all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest: Take my yoke upon you.*

In these and the like endeavours you must be industrious and unwearied, for sinne hath set your souls at so sad a distance from Christ, that they will not easily be prevailed with to come unto him. And this maketh way for the next doctrine (the first of those two which are chiefly intended in the Text.)

Dof.

That all those who come unto Christ are drawn unto him: No man cometh to Christ without drawing.

In the handling of this truth I will 1. Explain it. 2. Confirm it. 3. Apply it.

For

For Explication, We must know that this drawing (without which there is no coming unto Christ) doth import not only mans inability but also his renitency and contrariety unto motions towards Christ. This may be cleared by the use of the Original word in the Scripture, when applied both to lifelesse and living creatures. We reade of the *brifer that hath not drawn in the yoke*; And we know that the dead commodities with which the wain is loaded, whether timber, stone or mettals, &c. do in their naturall propensions oppose those motions which are made by the strength of the creature, which draweth them from one place to another. In like manner, who knoweth not that water (which is said to be drawn) is in its nature averse to elevation? And when this drawing is applied to living creatures, it noteth the like unwillingnesse, whether we consider it in them which are only sensible, or in such which are reasonable also. An instance of the former kinde may be given in the multitude of Fishes which *the Apostles were not able to draw out of the waters*; Those creatures gainsay and resist endeavours to bring them out of their proper element? And when the word is used in reference unto man drawn hither and thither, it speaketh to every rationall person mans opposition and averfenesse; As when *the multitude drew Paul and Silas into the market-place*, and at another time they *drew Paul out of the Temple*; who doubteth whether these men were unwilling to be thus dealt with?

The confirmation of the Doctrine may be considered both from Scripture and Reason. You may take proofs from the Scriptures, 1. Both Metaphorically, 2. And more openly expressed. The similitude in the Parable of the *lost Sheep when found laid on the Owners shoulder and brought home*, doth attest this Truth; for the Sheep will neither be driven nor led home; but must be carried; Neither words gentle or rough, nor blows lesse or greater can prevail, to divert its course of wandring, but it must (if ever it be brought home) come against its will upon the Shephards shoulders. And more open and expresse to the proof of the Doctrine is the Speech of Christ, calling sinners unto Festival fellowship

ἐλκυον.

Deut. 21. 3.
The LXX use
the word in
the Text.

Gen. 24. 11.
Joh. 4. 11, 15.

Joh. 21. 6.

Act. 16. 19.
& 21. 30.

Luk. 15. 4, 5.

Luk. 14. 23.
Reasons.

lowship with himself. *Compell them to come in.*

The Reasons of the Point may be given under three heads.

1. From man himself causally.
2. From the devil instrumentally.
3. From Christ occasionally working averseness unto conversion Evangelicall.

Reason 1.

The cause of this renitency doth lie radically in the hearts of all the children of fallen *Adam*, which may be considered in three particulars.

Rom. 5. 6.
Joh. 15. 5.
2 Sam. 4. 4.

1. Every man in the estate of nature is spiritually feeble, *without strength*, not able to do any thing without Christ. As *Mephibosheth* receiving a fall out of his Nurses arms, became lame all his life long. So all mankind by *Adams* first Apostacy did in such sort fall from God, that all their bones, all their gracious abilities were broken into peeces; *Grace was lost and Nature wounded*; Now as bodies bruised and weakened are averse to motions, being unable they are also unwilling to stir. So fareth it likewise with men in respect of their souls upon the same account.

Augustine.

Luk. 19. 14, 27

2. There is in every unregenerate heart an inbred antipathy to Jesus Christ and his government. Naturally all men *hate Christ*, and as *enemies* say in their hearts, *He shall not rule over us*. The will is way-ward and gain-saying. This the holy Ghost often asserts both in the Old and New Testament, *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people. How often would I, and ye would not. Ye stiffe-necked and uncircumcised in heart, ye do alwaies resist the holy Ghost; as your Fathers did, so do ye*. From these quotations may be noted, 1. That notwithstanding holy Ordinances enjoyed, corrections used, and blessings bestowed (for such were divine dispensations toward *Israel*) yet there is refractoriness. 2. That thus it was with them all naturally from generation to generation, Therefore in this respect there cannot be a coming unto Christ expected except men be drawn. As the *wilde beasts and creeping things*, &c. (in *Peters* vision) *were drawn up*, because naturally they sink down-ward, in like manner it is in the case now under discourse.

Isa. 65. 2.

Mat. 23. 37.

Act. 7. 50.

Act. 11. 6, 10.

3. The world with all the *thick mud and clay in it*, with Heb. 1. 6.
all the drossie contentments of it doth possesse every unregenerate soul; and by reason hereof the heart hangs back from Christ, and will not come without haling; You know that *Oxen bought, a Farm purchased, and a Wife married* being inordinately affected kept many from coming to feast with Christ; And as *Lot* with his Relations, through love unto the contents in *Sodom* would not come away till they were plucked out; So is it with naturall men, being rooted in the world; As the fond sucking child is said to be *drawn from the breasts*, because very loth to leave them. In this regard there is need of a conquering power to deliver us from this evil world. And the expression of the Apostle in the Originall doth hold forth thus much to our observation, which is also manifested every where by manifold experiences.

Luk. 14. 18.
Gen. 19. 16.

Ira. 28. 9.

Gal. 1. 4. *ὁ πῶς ἐξεδύω, καὶ ἐκρίπτει.*

From *Satan*, who hath and exerciseth great power in all unregenerate sinners. *They are in the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.* As a strong man armed he keepeth possession in them as in his palace, and will not go out till he be overcome, and his armour be taken from him: And the devil as a powerfull Prince worketh in the Children of disobedience. His power is not so much over their bodies as over their souls. blinding their mindes and holding their wils in thralldome, and hence it is that poor creatures in bondage to hell cannot be brought unto Christ without drawing. When *Israel* was brought out of *Egypt* it is said, *With a strong hand shall Pharaoh let them go*, and the Lord saith, *I will redeem you with a stretched out arm*; For as *Pharaoh* with his might sought to continue them in *Egyptian* slavery, so themselves being now accustomed to servitude, and finding some troubles attending attempts for their deliverance, were averse to a change, as many passages in that History do evidence. In like manner it is with unregenerate persons abiding under Satans power, and therefore without drawing they will not be brought to Christ.

Reason 2.
1 Tim. 3. 26.

Luk. 11. 21, 22

Eph. 1. 2.
1 Cor. 4. 4.

Exod. 6. 1, 6. }

From *Jesus Christ* himself and his government there are Reason 3.
occasionall hindrances of coming unto him. Although in

D

reality

Can. 5. 16.

2 Cor. 10. 4.
λογισμός.

Hla. 53. 2.

Can. 5. 9.

1 Cor. 1. 18, 23

Joh. 7. 47, 48.

2 Tim. 3. 12.

2 Tim. 4. 16.

Mar. 8. 19, 20.

reality whatsoever is in Christs person, or administrations, may rather be inducements then impediments unto the poor sinner, who is called to come unto him, (for he is *altogether lovely*;) yet because of those mis-apprehensions and carnal reasonings which are in the hearts of naturall men, many things are suggested which discourage the souls application unto him. Take instance in some.

Unto the eye of flesh and blood, *He hath no comeliness*; Naturall men are apt to say, *When we see him there is no beauty that we should desire him*: And therefore when they observe in a Christian insatiable gaspings after Christ, they speak thus (accounting their affections to be blinde fondnesse) *What is thy beloved more then another beloved*?

2. According to the judgement of purblind reason, many things asserted concerning Christ appear improbable and ridiculous; In which respects the wise Heathens accounted the Gospel foolishnesse, and thereupon rejected Christ with the high notions of him. As for example, *God and man, finite and infinite, to be united and to make one person. A child to be born of a virgin without the knowledge of man. That Christ should be God and yet die*: These are incredible Paradoxes unto the apprehensions of humane reason, and therefore Christ thus described is deserted.

3. Because upon their own observation they see that the most people (yea such who are great in the world and reputed wise) do generally neglect Christ, therefore they know no reason wherefore they should make unto him, *Then answered some of the Pharisees* (unto some who admired Christ) *Are ye also deceived? Have any of the Rulers or of the Pharisees beleevved on him*?

4. And they hear from the Scriptures, that *all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution*, and they do see this verified frequently, whereupon they rather fall off from him then follow him. When Paul was convented before Nero as a Malefactor, he saith, *No man stood with me, but all men forsook me*. And when our Saviour himself told the Scribe who came unto him, and said, *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*, *The Foxes have holes, and the birds*

birds of heaven have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head; then he draweth off, and we reade not of his coming to Christ afterward.

5. The things required in the Gospel of all Christs followers are such as are repugnant unto the principles which are incorporated into natural wise men, in which regard the wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God, it is not subject neither indeed can be. I will name some of those Gospel-commands, which will not easily down with unregenerate persons, viz. That a man must forsake the world and all the comforts thereof for Christ. When David sent unto Nabal for some bodily relief, the covetous churl returneth this answer, Shall I take my bread and my water, and my flesh which I have killed for my Servants, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be? In like manner, it seemeth absurd unto worldly men to relinquish all for Christ. And this gave check unto the rich young mans coming unto Christ, for he had great possessions. 2. That self-wisdom should be laid aside in the matters of God. The Apostle telleth us, that a man must become a fool that he may be wise: As he himself yeelds to the command of Christ not conferring with flesh and blood: Now as the men of Jabesh Gilead stuck at this condition of peace propounded by Nabal the Ammonite, viz. that he might thrust out their right eyes. So unregenerate morall wise men arise with renitency against this Evangelicall injunction, you must beleieve and not dispute, you must be guided by Christs counsels, though your selves cannot make out the reasonableness thereof by your own light. Hence it is that not many wise men after the flesh are called. 3. That Christians must pluck out their eyes if they offend, and cut off their right hand if it offend, and mortifie those lusts which are as the members of their bodies. As men are drawn unto death, yea, are very unwilling to yeeld unto the dissecting, the cutting off of any part of the body, though only a finger or a toe: So do carnall men keep at a distance from Jesus Christ, understanding that if they come unto him, their lusts (which are dear to them as their lives) must be massacred and mortified. Unto these particulars more might be added which

Rom. 8. 7.

Luk. 14. 33.

1 Sam. 25. 11.]

Mat. 19. 21, 22

1 Cor. 3. 18.

Gal. 1. 16.

1 Sam. 11. 1, 2.]

1 Cor. 1. 26.

Math. 5. 29, 30

Col. 3. 5.

Pro. 24. 11.

disswade poor souls from coming in unto Christ, viz. *That a man must not expect to be justified by his own works, or accepted because of his own goodnesse, or be saved by his own merits:* And therefore if all these considerations be seriously laid together, we shall assent to the Doctrine under hand, viz. *That sinners come not unto Christ without drawing.*

The Application of this Truth followeth.

Use I.

This Doctrine confuteth the Arminian-opinions of universall grace and of mans free-will, to relinquish self and the world, and the service of sin at his own pleasure, by his own strength, and that being awakened and dealt with by humane morall perswasion, he is able to walk unto Christ. Whereas our Saviour is open in expressing the naturall obstinacy, together with the inability of fallen man to rise and come unto Christ: As he spake thus to the Jews who had abundant helps both by Ordinances and other providences (as was before suggested;) *ye will not come unto me; And how often would I, and ye would not:* So what words could be uttered more expressly oppositely unto such conceits then these in my Text; *No man can come unto me except the Father that hath sent me draw him.* And that the Apostle Paul is fully against this imagination, viz. (that morall perswasion, that the propounding of arguments is sufficient to bring sinners to Christ;) is manifest by his asserting that the Elect themselves in the estate of depraved nature are *dead in trespasses and sins, and children of disobedience;* The Originall holds forth this truth, that they are *children of no perswasion,* people who will not be perswaded. Let Ministers or others say what they can, yet such is their perverseness that they will do the contrary: As those with whom the Prophet *Jeremiah* dealt faithfully and powerfully, returned this answer; *As for the word which thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee; But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth.* So do, and so will all the children of men cast off arguments and perswasions, which are produced to bring them unto Christ till the Lord renew them. And the carriage of stubborn *Israel* towards *Samuel* (perswading them to submit unto that government

Joh. 5. 40.
Mat. 23. 39.

Eph. 2. 1, 2.
* *Arminian.*
Non persuadebis
etiam si persua-
seris.

Jer. 44. 16, 17.

vernment which God had established and blessed) doth clearly discover the frame of the hearts of unregenerate men. Though *Samuel* had convinced them that their change so much desired by them, would tend unto their prejudice, yet they pertinaciouly hold unto this conclusion, *Nay, but we will have a King over us* ; A stubborn will maintaineth rebellion against reason.

1 Sam. 8. 19.
*Vidco meliora
proboque deso-
riora sequor.*
Use. 2.

Hence may be manifested the great mistake of two sorts of people ; 1. Of them who procrastinate and put off repentance, promising themselves to convert unto God hereafter. The Apostle *James* blameth men for faultinesse, neither so foul nor dangerous, *Go to now ye that say, To day, or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain ; For ye ought to say If the Lord will we shall live and do this or that.* For man hath more power to trade for his advantage in civil transactions, then to act himself from Satan to God. The expression of the Prophet *Jeremiah* is notable, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the Leopard his spots ? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil :* As every natural man being without strength is alwaies (if left to himself) unable to make unto Christ, so by continuance in evil courses his inability doth encrease. *How weak is thine heart* (saith the Lord God) *seeing thou dost all these things.* By abusing Gods patience and goodness, sinners are made more obdurate and impenitent, Therefore it is an Act of much ignorance and inconsideratenesse to defer endeavours of coming unto Christ upon confidence of future self-conversion.

Jam. 4. 13, 14.

Jer. 13. 23.
Rom. 5. 6.
*Qui non est ho-
die cras minus
apertus erit.*
Eze. 16. 30.
Rom. 2. 4.

2. Of Parents who neglect pains-taking to reform their children, while young, upon this consideration, that age and discretion will reclaim them. As my Text and the Doctrine under discourse doth crush such imaginations, so doth the practice of godly Parents and others, dealing with young ones, adding praiers unto affectionate importunity, that they might be subdued unto Christ. *Solomon* while young, was instructed and admonished both by his father and mother ; His father added arguments to counsell, his mother was very importunate ; *What my Son ! and what the*

Pro. 4. 3, 4.
1 Cro. 12. 9, 10
Pro. 3. 1, 2, 3.

Son of my Womb! and what the Son of my vows! Give not thy strength unto women, &c. And yet how earnest was his Father *David* with God in his behalf. *Give unto Solomon my Son a perfect heart, to keep thy Commandments, thy Testimonies and thy Statutes.* I forbear further instances because my discourse doth swell under my hand, and I must speed forward.

Use 3.

Lastly, (for I will reserve further application unto the next Doctrines) from hence might be manifested the necessity of a preaching Ministry to bring sinners unto Jesus Christ. Saint *Paul* doth certify us, that this was Gods end in sending him to preach the Gospel unto the Gentiles, *To open their eyes, and to turn them from the power of Satan to God: And his interrogations speak thus much also; How shall they beleeve on him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they bear without a Preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?* The sence of the Apostle in these expressions comes to thus much, that there is smal hope of the sinners coming unto Christ, without the administration of the Gospel by men lawfully, regularly called and constituted by the Lord.

Act. 16. 17, 18.
Rom. 10. 10, 11

This may yet further be illustrated by considering these particulars which I will nakedly propound without enlargement. 1. That the Gospel is compared unto a *draw-net*, whereby sinners are to be drawn out of the gulf, the sea of sin and misery. 2. That the Ministers of the Gospel are called *Fishers of men*. As the Fishes are drawn out of the water by angles or nets, so souls are pulled to Christ by preaching. 3. And that Ministers are those servants mentioned in the Parable, who are sent by the Lord *to compel people to come unto Christ*, that they might be feasted by him unto satisfaction. Therefore this contemned Ordinance of preaching by persons rightly called according to divine institution, is to be accounted more then expedient to draw sinful souls unto Christ.

Mat. 13. 47.

Mat. 4. 19.

Luk. 14. 23.

But though the Ministry of the Word and the Ministers thereof are not to be despised or neglected, yet they are only instruments and means in Gods hand to bring unto Christ, for God himself is the efficient cause of this conversion

conversion to Christ, as himself in my Text affirms; *No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him.* And this makes way for my next Observation,

That the drawing of sinfull souls unto Christ is the peculiar work of God. As Christ doth appropriate the sinners coming to himself unto his fathers power and grace; *I said unto you,* Joh. 6. 65. *that no man can come unto me except it were given him of my Father.* So God the Father assumeth the glory thereof to himself, speaking thus to the converted sinner, *With loving-kindnesse have I drawn thee.* The further proof of the Point may be cleared by shewing that all those actings are proper unto God, whereby the sinners coming unto Christ is expressed in Scripture. 1. The sinners Union with Christ is a Creation, *Ye are his workmanship created in Christ Iesus* (saith Paul to the converted Ephesians;) And *if any man be in Christ* (saith the same Apostle) *he is a new creature:* Now God alone is the Creator. 2. It is a second birth, or a Regeneration which to reason (as Nicodemus ludged) is a work impossible, and beyond the reach of humane strength; and therefore it belongs to God. *They are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* 3. It is a kinde of Resurrection, *a quickning of the dead:* And it is God alone who raiseth the dead. 4. The sinner which cometh unto Christ is delivered from the power of Satan. And God is to be attended that such a poor creature may be recovered from the snare of the devil, *who is taken captive by him to do his will;* for no other power but the Spirit of God can binde and overcome, and eject this strong man armed. 3. And whereas the soul cometh to Christ by beleaving, the Apostle asserts that faith is the gift of God, and that we beleave because we receive the Spirit of faith.

Hence for the right understanding of this Point it may be demanded how God draweth the soul to Christ, and how the essential liberty of mans will can be preserved, if this forcible drawing be asserted.

I answer.

1. That I dare not undertake peremptorily to set down any one constant way which the Lord holds unto, in this work:

Doct.

Joh. 6. 65.

Ier. 31. 3.

Eph. 2. 10.

2 Co. 5. 17.

11. 10.

Isa. 4. 26.

Joh. 3. 3. 4.

Joh. 1. 13.

Eph. 2. 1. 5.

2 Cor. 1. 9.

Ag. 26. 18.

2 Tim. 2. 25. 26.

Mar. 12. 29.

Joh. 6. 35.

Eph. 2. 8.

2 Cor. 4. 13.

Quest.

Ans.

Act. 16. 14.
Act. 9. 3. 4.
& 16. 25.

Joh. 3. 8.

Ecl. 1. 1. 5.

Fortiter, sed
suaviter. Aug.

Gen. 9. 27.

Luk. 14. 23.
αὐτοὶ καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι

2 Cor. 5. 14, 15

Act. 16. 15.

work : For some are more silently brought unto Christ, as *Lydia* whose heart God opened secretly ; and others come unto Christ with a greater noise, as *Paul* is knocked down and humbled ; The Jaylor cometh in trembling, being affrighted with an earthquake ; And many are gradually, and without much sense to themselves brought out of an estate of nature into fellowship with Jesus Christ. The Lord Christ himself saith, *The winde bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, So is every one that is born of the Spirit.* And wise *Solomon* hath these words, *Thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb :* How much lesse discernable is the punctuall progresse of Gods grace in bringing the soul unto Christ, and making the new creature in him.

But to me it is evident, that notwithstanding this drawing there is no violence at all offered unto mans will, for God operateth sweetly though powerfully, according to the capacity of the reasonable creature in bringing the sinner to Christ. This may be manifested by sundry Scripture-expressions. As for instance, The prayer of *Noah* (which also containeth a Prophecy) for the effectuall calling of the Gentiles into spirituall fellowship with the Jews in the privileges of Gospel-grace, is thus expressed ; *God shall persuade Japhet, and he shall dwell in the Tents of Shem ;* And as for that phrase, *Compell them to come in,* the Originall word signifieth, *necessitate them,* i. e. endeavour to bring them by shewing the necessity thereof. The like sense beareth that expression of Saint *Paul*, *The love of Christ constraineth us,* as the words following declare, *because* (saith he) *we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead ; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto him which died for them and rose again ;* Therefore this constraint or compulsion was carried on in such sort, that no violence was thereby offered unto the will. As also, when the Apostle speaking of the importunity whereby *Lydia* prevailed with *Silas* and himself to come unto her house, he useth these words, *She constrained us.*

She

This being premised I proceed to suggest that method and way which the Lord (as I humbly conceive) useth ordinarily in drawing sinners by faith unto his Son Jesus Christ: And this I will propound under five heads.

First, The Lord begins the work by conviction. The Apostle discovering Gods dealing with the sinner, in tendency to his conversion faith, *He is convinced*. As in the beginning of the Creation of the world God said, *Let there be light*, So when his Majesty regenerateth fallen man, he *bringeth from darknesse to light*. And by this convincing light let into the soul, the Lord manifesteth both sin committed and misery deserved.

1 Cor. 14.24.

Gen. 1.3.

A& 26.18.

1. The eye of the understanding is opened to see those waies sinfull wherein formerly no sin was discerned. As Peter shot this arrow of conviction into the hearts of them who had an hand in putting Christ to death, that how meanly soever they had thought of him, yet God had owned and *advanced him*, and this *pierced them* preparing them for approaches unto him for salvation. So the Apostle Paul relating his own conversion, telleth us how he was convinced by the latitude and spiritualnesse of Gods Law, that inward lustings were sinfull, and he by considering his inward pravity together with the imperfections of his duties, was driven out of himself unto Jesus Christ.

A& 2.36.

Rom. 7.

2. Deserved misery is presented to the view of the poor guilty creature, whereof he was not aware before. Thus Paul was told by a voice from heaven, *It's hard for thee to kick against the pricks*. Although before, this persecutor being backed with the authority of the times, conceived his course justifiable, and his condition safe; yet now hearing of his danger, he submits, and desireth to know from Christ what he should do to prevent his deep danger. In like manner dealth the Lord with other ignorant, secure sinners whom he purposeth to bring unto Jesus Christ.

A& 9.5.

Secondly, By means of the fore-mentioned conviction, God in such sort awakeneth the sleeping conscience, that it accuseth, condemneth, and affrighteth the guilty sinner.

Rom. 2.15.

1 Sam. 24.

1. Now his heart smiteth him for faults formerly sleighted.

E

Con-

Conscience spreads a large catalogue of old miscarriages before his eyes. *Inprimis*, thus deeply guilty in the loins of *Adam*, of no lesse then high treeason against thy Creator. *Item*, Thy nature thus universally defiled and poysoned. *Item*, So much time mispent, so many blessings abused, so much counsell gainsaied, so many Ordinances despised, &c. Now his *sins are ever before him*. Every place and company, and providence, doth occasion the remembrance of some wickednesse; As *Iosephs* brethren being in trouble, their consciences whisper their old guilt of their *brothers blood*.

Psa. 51. 3.

Gen. 42. 21.

2 Sam. 24. 10.

1 Tim. 1.

Luk. 15.

Joh. 33. 13.

2. And sin thus particularly remembred is now aggravated by the sinners own conscience, though before extenuated and accounted a small matter. *I have sinned greatly in what I have done, and I have done very foolishly* This is the language of conscience where God commands it to speak. My sins have been so many, so hainous, committed, repeated, multiplied against so much light, so much love, notwithstanding so many checks and warnings, I am the *chiefest of sinners*. He goeth to God and saith, *Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee: And he turneth unto men, and saith, I have perverted my waies and it did not profit me.*

Gen. 4.

Mat. 27.

Psa. 32.

Deut. 28.

3. Conscience minding the man of his many sins and their mighty aggravations, doth also thunder within him, divine threatnings, flashing the flames of divine displeasure (as it were) into his face. Now he thinks that he seeth hell boyl- ing, that he heareth devils roaring, and damned souls skritch- ing, and wisheth that he had never been made. Now like guilty *Cain* he is ready to fear that *every one will kill him*, that every thing will be his bane and ruine. Now like *Judas*, being condemned in his own conscience, he is weary of his life, and though he be afraid to die, yet he is unwilling to live. Now he roareth as a man upon the rack, through the anguish of his spirit, and *his moisture is turned into the drought of Summer*. *In the morning he wisheth for night, and at night he longeth for the morning*. Thus have I suggested the second work of God in drawing the sinner towards himself, where- in for brevity sake I have been the lesse exact in amplifying and applying Scriptures, but have only in the generall pointed

pointed at some of the actings of an awakened conscience, conducing unto the sinners conversion to Christ.

Thirdly, When the heart is thus affrighted the Lord causeth the sinner to finde a famine (as it were) in all creatures whatsoever. Neither possessions accumulated, nor parts heightened, nor duties multiplied, nor any imaginable comfort on this side heaven, can yeeld satisfaction or relief. The Prodigal cannot get a belly full either amongst hogs or men, and then he resolveth to return home unto his father; And when a man in the midst of all creature-enjoyments seeth himself in a barren *wildernesse*, and findeth his way to true comfort, to be *hedged up with thorns*, then he beginneth to consider, whether back again unto God be not the better way. The Gospel-Prophet that he might prevail with needy souls to make unto Christ, he telleth them, that *bread* is not to be had elsewhere, and that *all labour* will be for no profit till the soul come unto Christ. And thus the Lord stormeth the afflicted soul out of all sublunaries, so that it dareth not trust unto any priviledges or performances whatsoever. The Apostle Paul experimentally and fully speaketh unto this particular in *Phil. 3.* which I desire may be seriously considered. And thus *poor sinners lying under hedges and in the high-waies* (where supplies for hunger cannot be had) are compelled, viz. by necessity compelled (as was formerly noted) to come unto the place where plentiful provision is in readinesse for their relief. Here *Israels* reasoning and resolution thereupon is notable; *Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the Hills, and from the multitude of Mountains; Truly in the Lord our God is the Salvation of Israel.* And this leadeth to the next step whereby the awakened, affrighted, necessitous sinner is drawn unto Christ.

Luk. 15. 64, 16

Hos. 2. 4, 7, 14.

Isa. 55. 2.

Phil. 3.

Luk. 14. 23.

Jer. 3. 23.

Gen. 21. 15, 16
19.

Fourthly, As when *Hagar* having no water in her bottle sate down under the shrubs, and wept, fearing that she and her Son must die in the wilderness, for want of water, then *God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water*: So dealeth his Majesty with poor thirsting souls, ready to perish (as themselves imagine) for want of relief, he suggesteth that sufficiency which is in Jesus Christ to save compleatly all such

- who come unto him: Thus the Gospel-Prophet that he might prevail with the empty indigent creature to come in, upon his Proclamation, he tels him of *water, wine, milk and fatnesse* to be found in Christ. And its very probable that *the Word of the Lord* which *Paul* preached unto the trembling *Taylor and his Family*, (whereby they were drawn to Christ) was the Word of the Gospel revealing *Jesus Christ*. This is evident that the *Prodigal* almost starved for want of food was carried home in his resolutions by this consideration, *In my Fathers house there is bread enough and to spare. Augustine* thus glosseth upon my Text; As the Shepherd draweth the hungry sheep (speaking according to the custome of those times) by green boughs, holding these before them, from whence filling might be expected: Under this head these further particulars are (as I conceive) strong inducements unto Christ: 1. That Christ in whom all fulnesse dwelleth was sent into the world for this very purpose *to seek and save lost souls, to dissolve in poor sinners the work of the devil; And how chearing was this thought unto Paul, when abased in himself for his former faultinesse: This is a faithfull saying and worthy all acceptation, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.* 2. That God the Father (who giveth out Christ unto humbled sinners) is graciously disposed towards lost creatures, desiring to finde mercy; And this meditation hath in it attractive vertue: *With loving-kindenesse* (saith the Lord) *have I drawn thee; And I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love:* Here the sinner calling to minde both discourfes and experiences, discovering Gods goodnesse, gathereth encouragement to creep towards him. And in this case self-condemned sinners speak of God (as *Benhadads* servants did of the Kings of *Israel*) *Behold now, we have heard that the God of heaven is mercifull, therefore let us put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes on our heads, and go unto him, peradventure he will save our souls.* 3. That the Lord doth not only allow the sinking sinner to come, but doth also invite and sollicite his approaches unto him, adding withall promises of mercy. Thus much appeareth by making known some such Scriptures as these,
- viz.*

Isa. 55. 1, 2.

A&T. 16. 32.

Luk. 15. 17.
Ista revelatio est
ipsa attractio.Luk. 19. 10.
1 Joh. 3. 8.

1 Tim. 1. 15.

Jer. 31. 3.
Hos. 11. 4.

1 Kin. 20. 31.

viz. *As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever beleeveth in him should not perish but have eternal life. Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will ease you: And these breakings out of divine grace unto the dolefull sinner, do beget determinations in him to make unto Christ; Even as when God spake thus to old Israel, Return ye back-sliding children, and I will heal your back-slidings; They answer, Behold, we come unto thee.* Now all these particulars are so many cords of love which God fasteneth upon the heart of the awakened sinner, whereby he also draweth him unto Christ. And men are said in the Scriptures to be drawn by allurements and instructions as really as by coactions. You heard before of *drawing men as malefactors to the judgement seat.* This is done by violence. And you read also of drawing by inticements; *A man is drawn and inticed.* As *Joshua* was said to *draw* his enemies by a politick stratagem; and oppressors draw people by policy into their net. So the Apostle *Paul* speaketh thus to the *Corinthians*, *I caught you by guile.* As the skilfull fisherman, by enticing baits, doth draw the fishes from one place to another. So the Lord himself, bayting (as it were) the Ministry of the word, with Gospel-sweetnesse, doth draw hunger-bitten hearts unto Jesus Christ.

Sixtly and lastly, God addeth unto all the former *attractives*, the effectuall irresistibile operation of his own Spirit, whereby the sinner is drawn unto Christ indeed. Our Lord himself, discoursing in this Chapter of his Fathers drawing souls unto him, telleth us, that there is a *peculiar learning from the Father* (which is beyond mans teaching) and *such a gift bestowed by the Father* (which no creature can give) whereby the sinner is drawn unto Christ. As when *Lazarus* came out of the grave, and Christs Apostles, upon his call, left Ships, nets, &c. and followed him, there went undoubtedly a conquering vertue with his command: And as when *Elijah* cait the mantle upon *Elisha*, he left his plow and Oxen, and ran after *Elijah*; there was a mighty power went forth from God, to cause that motion. In like manner

Joh. 3. 14, 15.

Mar. 11. 28.

Jer. 3. 22.

Trahitur animus & amore.

Aug.

Jam. 2. 6.

Jam. 1. 14.

Joh. 8. 6, 6.

Psa. 10. 9.

2 Cor. 12. 16.

Joh. 6. 45, 65.

Joh. 11. 43, 44.

Mar. 4. 19, 20.

1 Kin. 19. 19,

20.

is it with the soul which comes to Christ. It is not in the power of man, or any meer morall perswasion, but the accession of Gods omnipotent grace, which changeth the bent of mans will, making it willing, which was unwilling and would have continued perverse unto eternity, if his Spirit had not mightily overcome it. *Thy people* (saith *David* to God) *shall be willing, in the day of thy power.* When people have withstood convictions, accusations of conscience, argumentative perswasions, together with many sollicitations of common grace, the Lord at length assaults them with his almighty grace, and draweth them unto himself. And thus having, in the illustration of this great doctrine, endeavoured to manifest (according to my best apprehensions) the way and method of God in drawing sinners unto Christ: I proceed to the application of the truth, wherein I must only hint at heads without enlargement.

Pla. 110. 3.

Omnipotentissime
mi faciliatue.
L. 12.

Use. 1.

Act. 16. 14.
Phil. 2. 13.

Use 2.

Pla. 62.
Rom. 14. 4.

Rom. 11. 23.

Use 3.

This Doctrine doth demolish the Arminian holds, in the point of mans free will, and power to come unto Christ at his pleasure. How opposite are Christs words to their assertion: It was God who opened the heart of *Lydia*; and it is he alone that *worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

Hence it followeth, that Gods power is greater then all the strength in the world, in hell, or in mans wicked-heart; seeing in spite of all contradicting opposition whatsoever, he can draw the worst of sinners unto Christ.

This I note, 1. To magnifie God. 2. To confirm poor converted souls in confidence of their perseverance. *He shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand.* 3. And to encourage wounded souls to bear up hopes, in looking unto the Lord, for the compleating of the smallest beginnings of grace in their bosoms. The conversion of the Jews, and their conjunction unto Christ (notwithstanding their wofull waywardnesse) is assured upon this ground. *They shall be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.*

Hence Christians being drawn unto Christ, should be moved unto thankfulness. St *Paul* finding himself in Christ, admireth Gods mercy, and doth not ascribe his conversion unto his own high qualifications, or former blamelesse conversation,

vation, but giveth God the glory of it; *Now unto the King eternall, immortall, invisable, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen.* And he doth upon this account give thanks in the behalfe of the *Colossians*, *Being delivered or rescued from the power of darknesse, &c.*

In the amplifying of this Use, there are two things enquirable (*viz.*) 1. The evidences of a mans being drawn unto Christ. 2. The arguments which may perswade gratitude.

Its needfull to examine, whether we be drawn unto Christ, because many by awakenings, humblings, and partial amendment, are brought forward towards Christ, who yet come not up unto him *Herod heard John, and did many things.* The discreet Scribe was not farre from the Kingdom of Heaven. *And Agrippa was almost perswaded to be a Christian.* As some fishes are almost drawn to Land, and then leap back into the water again. Therefore for satisfaction in this matter the notes are considerable under two heads.

First, The evidences of unfained faith, are also signes of the sinners coming unto Christ: *for believing in him, is coming unto him,* as was before manifested. In this regard, you must enquire diligently, 1. What value you put upon Christ? *For he is precious to them who beleve.* 2. Where you entettain him. *For, as belevers do receive him, so he dwelleth in their hearts by faith.* 3. And what welcome you do give him. *For, faith doth purifie the heart,* from all pollutions, which might annoy him.

Secondly, The soul, which is drawn unto Christ, doth cashier all known sins, and doth in a speciall manner come off, from all creature dependances whatsoever.

There are two particulars comprized in this character, which I shall point at distinctly. The former is this (*viz.*) That because *Christ and Belial cannot accord,* therefore the sinners return to God, is accompanied with resolutions to renounce all known evils formerly indulged. This is the language of him, who cometh to God upon his call. *Take away all iniquity. What have I to do any more with Idols?* And therefore mans refusing to submit unto Christs government, speaketh rather departures from him, then approaches to him.

The

1 Tim. 1. 14.
15, 17
Col. 1. 12, 13.

1 Pet. 2. 7.

Mar. 6. 20.

Mar. 12. 34.

Act. 20. 28.

Joh. 6. 35.

1 Pet. 2. 7.

Joh. 1. 12.

Eph. 3. 17.

Act. 15. 9.

2 Cor. 6. 15.

Hos. 14. 1, 2, 8.

Luk. 19. 29.

The latter is this: That the soul which cometh unto Christ, doth relinquish all creature refuges in point of reliance. *It cometh from all things in the world, as from a barren wilderness, leaning alone upon Christ. It rejoiceth in Christ, and hath no confidence in the flesh.* And doubtlesse, fiduciall coming unto Christ, is not consistible with a trusting unto any thing besides, in point of justification or salvation. The Apostle Paul is open, in this assertion, *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you, are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from grace.*

Secondly, Those who can by these marks clear up to their own hearts, their being come unto Christ, may be perswaded to blesse God, by these Arguments. 1. Because of their low and loathsome estate in themselves, when God called and carried them unto Christ. In the Parable, our Saviour compareth them to poor persons, which lie under hedges, and in the high wayes, as being poor and contemptible. And the Apostle speaking of himself and others elected to life, saith, *We our selves were sometimes foolish and hatefull.* Is not this admirable, that we who were more loathsome then Toads, should by love be drawn into the bosom of Christ! 2. Because our condition was wofully miserable before God drew us, and would have been so unto eternity, if these cords of grace had not been fastned upon us. Suppose men bound unto the Chariot wheels as slaves, and so drawn about in the dirt, should by strength of hand be delivered, would not such a rescue require thanks? Now our condition was worse, before God drew us to his Sonne: *We were in the Kingdom of darknesse, we served divers lusts, and were captives to the Devil:* but God hath knocked off the bolts, broken open the prison doors, and by an outstretched arm, hath plucked us to himself. Questionlesse, *Lots* plucking out of *Sodom*, when devouring fire from Heaven was ready to fall upon it, was not a deliverance so great, so glorious. 3. Because, as there was no good seen, so neither could there be any good foreseen in us, but that, which himself intended to work freely by the power of his own grace. *Not by the works of righteousness which we have done,*

Can. 8. 5.
Phil. 3. 3.

Gal. 5. 4.

Luk. 14. 23.

Tit. 3. 3.

Rev. 3. 17.

Col. 1. 13.
Tit. 3. 3.
2 Tim. 2. 26.

Gen. 16.

Rom. 7. 18.

Tit. 3. 4, 5.

done, but by mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and by the renewing of the holy Ghost. 4. Because our goodnesse (though we should suppose it to be wrought out in a gentle measure, by our own abilities) never did, nor shall extend to God with any advantage. *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him ? or what receiveth he of thy hand ? whereas* Makers redeem their servants from slavery, hoping to be enriched by their services.

Joh 35.7.

5. Because of their happinesse who are drawn unto Christ. *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee. Their souls shall delight themselves in fatnesse. And whosoever cometh shall never be cast out.* The Christian who once cometh unto Christ, shall make his bosom the place of his abode everlastingly, resting here, as in his center, evermore.

Pla. 65.4.
Isa. 55.3.
Joh. 6.37.
Terminus ad quem, in quo quiescis moris.

6. Because there are only some, comparatively, who are drawn out of the world and out of themselves, unto Christ. *They are a little flock,* yea a little little flock, as the Originall suggests. Though by the sound of the Gospell, multitudes are called upon, to come in unto Christ, yet our Saviour saith, *Many are called, but few are chosen.* And as those who are so fetched into the fellowship of Church-Ordinances, many shall be rejected as refuse stuff, by the Lord Jesus, at the last day.

Luk. 12.32.
Ἰδὲ μικρὸν πομπήν.

Mat. 20.16.
& 19.47.

Before I leave this Use, I must cleer one place of Scripture, where the words of Christ seem in two particulars to oppose what I have delivered. The words are these : *I will draw all all men unto me.* Hence may be raised these two Objections, (*viz.*) 1. Against my Doctrine, (*viz.*) That sinners are not only drawn to Christ by the Father, but Christ also draweth them unto himself?

Joh. 12.32.

Quest.

The answer is easie, (*viz.*) 1. The externall works of God, both of Creation and Providence, whether generall or speciall, do indifferently belong unto all the three Persons of the Trinity. *My father worketh hitherto* (saith Christ) *and I work.* 2. And their operations answer their manner of existence. The Father worketh of himself; the Sonne, by commission, from the Father; and the holy Ghost both from he Father and the Sonne.

Answ.

Joh. 5.17.
Modus operandi sequitur modum essendi.

F The

Quest.

The second Objection, started, is against my last argument, perswading thanks to God for our drawing to Christ, (*viz.*) the paucity of them who are brought home unto him; whereas the quotation objected, speaks of Christs drawing all men unto him?

Ans.

Joh. 6. 37. 39.

Genera singulorum, non singula generum.

The answer ordinarily given may be satisfying, and it is double: 1. By all men, we are to understand all the Elect, or all whom the Father gave him, as himself speaks. 2. By all men, are meant, all sorts, (*viz.*) 1. Both high and low, superiours and inferiours: According to the expression, 1 Tim. 2. 1, 4. *God will have all men to be saved,* (*viz.*) Kings and other great persons, together with people of a meaner rank: and therefore the Apostle moveth upon this ground, prayers for all men, and for Kings particularly. 2. All men, (*viz.*) persons of all nations and kindreds in the world, (*viz.*) Gentiles and Jews. 3. People of all dispositions and tempers. As Christ healed every disease (for so the Greek expresseth it) and every sickness, which our Translators (intending to give the sense) render, *All manner of sickness, and all manner of disease, among the people.*

Rom. 7. 9.

Mat. 4. 23.

ἡ ἀσθενία καὶ ἡ μαλακία.

Use 4.

The last Use, concerneth them, who are not, as yet, come unto Christ; There are two particulars, whereof they are to be advised:

First, To take heed of making any resistance, against the means of grace and the motions of the holy Ghost, whereby God is wont to draw sinners unto Christ. This is the Apostle his inference (*viz.*) That because the whole work in tendency unto our happinesse, doth lie upon Gods hand, therefore we should take heed of incensing him, in any kind. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure.* And to quicken this admonition, these meditations, may be of singular use.

Phil. 2. 12, 13.

Mat. 23. 37, 38

1. That mans gainsaying of Ministeriall solicitations, may provoke the Lord to remove that means of our winning unto Christ. *How often would I (said Christ to Jerusalem) have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens; and ye would not. Behold your house is become desolate.*

2. That

2. That though means should be continued, yet sinfull resistances, may cause God, to withdraw the assistance of his Spirit, in such sort, that you should be gracelesse and Christlesse for ever. Thus much is suggested, by those heavy words of the Prophet *Ezekiel*. *Because I have purged thee* (q. d. I have endeavoured your amendment in means administred) *and thou wast not purged; thou shalt not be purged from thy filthinesse any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.* And if your present frowardnesse, should be punished with everlasting stubbornesse, how sad would your condition be unto all eternity!

Ezek. 24. 13.

3. That the misery of none shall be so heavy hereafter, as of them who have withstood the most frequent and forcible sollicitations here. *Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded, but ye have set at naught my counsell: I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh, &c.* O that these thunderclaps, these threatning from the word of truth, might awaken secure sinners, who deafen their ears against Gods call, and stiffen their hearts against the intreaties of his Spirit, and stop the clamours of their own accusing consciences. Alas, alas, If God doth not draw you to Christ, you will never come at him. *And his Spirit shall not alwayes strive with man.* Which call will be the last, which knock will be the last, which tender of Christ will be the last, you do not know; *therefore to day, while it is called to day, do not harden your hearts, lest God swear in his wrath, that you shall never enter into his rest.*

Pro. 1. 24, 26.

Gen. 6. 3.

Heb. 3. 7, 11.

Secondly, To be serviceable to Gods providence, in the utmost of your endeavours in tendency unto your drawing to Jesus Christ. Although the effecting of this work lieth upon Gods hand, and he hath undertaken it, in the behalf of his elect, (*All that the father giveth me, shall come to me,*) yet must all men wait upon the Lord, in the use of his means, that their hearts may be wrought unto Christ. Though our salvation is from God efficiently, yet people are commanded instrumentally *to save themselves.* And as God would be sought unto by prayer, that your stubborn hearts may be conformed unto his will, so the other means of conversion unto

Joh. 6. 37.

Aa. 2. 40.
Ezc. 36. 26, 37.

Christ must be attended. This one thing, I shall advise in the use of all holy Ordinances, that you would convince your selves, more and more thoroughly, of the happinesse to be enjoyed in Christ, which cannot possibly be had elsewhere : for in this way, God works the reasonable soul unto himself. The wise woman by *considering* the worth of a field, is moved to purchase it. The Merchant meeting with the Pearl of great price, is content to sell all that he may buy it. And the Prodigal by consultation with himself, is prevailed with to return unto his father. Therefore cast into the balance of consideration, whether it be not much better to relinquish all for Christ, then to be without him, in the enjoyment of all other contentments whatsoever. The Originall word translated *Draw*, doth hold forth this notion, that our hearts are drawn by strength of arguments, weighed judiciously.

By arguments *Paul* was constrained, and by importunity *Lydia* compelled the Apostles to be her guests, as was before manifested : therefore presse hard upon your own spirits, and take no deniall from your wayward hearts, but hale by strong convictions, and pluck by unwearied importunity, that you may be brought about unto Christ. The text hinteth this (*viz.*) That God draweth the heart unregenerate, against its naturall inclination, yet being changed by his renewing grace, it cometh unto Christ freely : therefore add prayer, unto all other courses taken for this end. *Draw Lord and we will run. Convert us O Lord and we shall be converted.*

For your encouragement, many things might be cast into your consideration. 1. Gods desire, that you should rather come unto him, then be cast off for ever. *Turn you, turn you, for why will you die?* 2. His intreaties by his Embassadors, whereby he beseecheth you, to come unto Christ for reconciliation. 3. His long-sufferance, waiting for your return. *When shall it once be.* 4. And the promise, which is the conclusion of my text. *And I will raise him up at the last day.*

This Promise (especially considering the occasion of this Assembly and Sermon) should have been more fully spoken unto, - then time will give leave ; therefore I will shut up all with few words.

Pro. 31. 16.

Mar. 13. 44.

Luk. 15. 17.

* ΕΛΧΩ, Dicitur
de ponderibus
qua bilancem in
in alteram par-
tem sua gravi-
tate trahunt.
Scapula in ελχων
pondus.

Cant. 1. 4.

Lam. 5. 21.

Ezek. 33. 11.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

Jer. 13. 27.

All those who come unto Christ, shall be raised up at the last Day. Doct.

This assertion 1. Imphieth their Death. 2. Expresseth A&. 24. 15. their Resurrection.

Though there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, yet there will be then a great difference betwixt them who came to Christ, and those who kept off from him in the time of their life on earth. *They who have done good, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and they who have done evil, unto the resurrection of condemnation.* The former shall be raised by his peculiar grace in pursuance of Gods promise, that they may be everlastingly happy : and the other shall be raised by his power and justice, in the pursuance of his severe threatening, that they may be eternally miserable. Joh. 5. 29. Dan. 12. 2.

The only Use that I shall make, is for comfort both in reference to our dying selves, and our deceased friends, brought unto Christ. They (whose bodies are gone to the house of rottenesse, and we who are following them, shall be raised again to glory at the last day. Use.

In the amplification of this Use,
First, Enquire who have and who have not ground of chearing from this truth. For your help herein, reflect upon your selves by remembering the fore-mentioned characters of coming unto Christ, and adde hereto with faithfull applications these Scriptures following. The former, *At the day of revelation of the righteous judgement of God, he will render to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and immortality, eternal life ; But unto them who are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousnesse, indignation and wrath : Tribulation and anguish upon the soul of every man that doth evil, of the Jew first and also of the Gentile.* Here let conscience give in evidence, whether you be carefull or careless in approving your selves unto God in waies of well-doing ; whether are you facil and frameable to Gods revealed will, or do you peevishly and pertinaciously contradict it ? Whether be you constant and steady in obedientiall endeavours, or are you fickle, off and on in a Christian conversation ? Now upon due consideration hereof judge Rom. 20. 5, 7, 8, 9.

of your estate and hopes without partiality. The other Scripture which I shall produce for your discovery is this, *Many* Phil. 3.19,20, *walk whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, whose* 21. *glory is their shame, who minde earthly things : But our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour the Lord Iesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, and make it like unto his glorious body.* Here give answer as in the presence of God, Upon what is your heart most fully fixed? whether do your affections flow forth most, for back and belly, for clothes, food, and worldly advantages? or for the treasures of grace, and for heavens glory? Give in your answer and accordingly judge of your hopes.

Secondly, If upon this enquiry you finde ground of good hope, that you be in Christ, and shall through his mercy be raised up at the last day, then with comfort take notice what your condition will be at that time : 1. Your bodies shall be glorious, shining like the *Sun*, like to the *glorious body of Christ*, and shall be *incorruptible*, free from all passion and mutation for ever. 2. And your souls shall be full of light, and *satisfied with Gods image*, knowing God perfectly according to the utmost of a creatures capacity, and compleatly answering the minde and heart of God in all things evermore.

As this truth is thus comfortable in reference to our selves, being in daily expectation of natures dissolution, so is it a cordial unto mourners upon the death of their godly friends, of whom they had good cause to hope that they were drawn to Christ before they died. The Apostle having spoken of the various advantages following the Resurrection, he calls upon the *Thessalonians to comfort one another with the words*, in the behalf of them who are dead or *fallen asleep in the Lord*. Consider 1. That now already upon death their *souls are perfect*, and that they are with Christ, which is a condition farre better then any imaginable estate on earth. 2. That at this last day (when they and we shall be raised again) then both we and they shall be in regard of our blessednesse more comfortable one to another then ever we were on earth, yea (and which will crown our mutuall company with unspeakable delight) and then *shall we be ever with the Lord*. And this I propound as a cordial

Mat. 13.43.

Phil. 3.22.

1 Cor. 15.42,

1 Joh. 3.2.

Pla. 17.14.

1 Thes. 4.14,
16,18.

Heb. 12.22.

Phil. 1.23.

a cordial for the relieving of their spirits who are now real mourners, because of the death of Mr *Robert Strange* the precious Gentleman whose Funeral this day hath occasioned this Sermon, of whom I may safely say thus much in general, that those who had the most familiar, full acquaintance with him, have the best grounds of perswasion that he was drawn to Christ before he died, and shall be raised again to glory at the last day, when all you, and all others who love the Lord Jesus Christ shall meet with him, and with him sing Hallelujahs unto the daies of eternity.

Now because I know that some Narrative is expected from me at this time concerning him, I shall give you a faithfull account of what I have received from good intelligence. He was a Gentleman very well descended; He was the only Son of *Robert Strange Esq;* by *Jane* the Daughter of *Sr Anthony Hungerford* Knight, who was with childe of him when his Father died, and was delivered of him six moneths after. He had 7. or 8. years education under the care of his tender mother, who was a woman of singular piety and prudence. At her death she committed him for his further education to the care of his Aunt Mrs *Goddard* of *Standen* in *Wiltshire*, who discharged her trust with great discretion and motherly tenderness, both while he was a Scholar in the Countrey, and during his continuance at the University; He was admitted into *Queens Colledge* at *Oxford*, and staid there 3 years. From thence he removed unto *London*, and spent about 3 years more in the Inns of Court. For these last three years and afterwards, till the time of his death, he was under the eye and care of the Honourable Lady, the Lady *Hungerford*, from whom he received many favours, and with whom he weekly frequented such Sermons as God was pleased to bleise unto his spirituall advantage. His pilgrimage upon earth was but short, for he was but 23 years old the beginning of this moneth. Notwithstanding his youth, and the fair estate whereof he was heir, he was happily free from all those taints of vitiousnesse which Gentlemen of his age and rank are too commonly stained with. In all the passages of his life he was civil, inoffensive, and exemplary unto them with whom he conversed. His intellectuall

tual parts were quick, which were much improved by his
 studiousnes, for he was a good Scholar. He was well grounded
 in the Fundamentals of Religion, and not unacquainted with
 the controversies of these disputing daies. As he was regular
 in his conversation, so God preserved him sound in his judg-
 ment from all the errors of these giddy times. He foresaw the
 frail frame of his own body not likely to stand long, of which
 he spake often, and therefore the rather prepared for death
 by an holy life and acquaintance with Christ. That storm of
 his last sicknesse (which was fierce and violent) he called a
 surprise, though God had graciously fitted him for it. The
 week before his death he heard three Sermons (besides those
 upon the Sabbath wherein he was constant) one of which
 was at the Funeral of Reverend Mr *Whitaker*, which took
 up his thoughts and most of his discourse during the time of
 his sicknesse; No means of his recovery were neglected. His
 Physician was a Doctor of known ability and much experi-
 ence, a man full of prudence, care, and tendernesse: And
 the Lady *Hungerford* from the strength of her affection,
 thirsting after his recovery, did not only send but went unto
 diverse godly Ministers in the City to quicken their prayers
 for him; In the absence of some, much more able then my
 self, her Ladiship desired me to visit him, which was done
 accordingly. The matter of our conference was Jesus Christ,
 who is in life and death advantage; His heart was affected
 with the discourse, and often pathetically spake these words
 of our Saviour (which were in that regard my Text) *No man
 can come to me except my Father draw him.* He apprehend-
 ed that difficulties did attend his disease, and therefore ear-
 nestly entreated me to pray with him and for him. The Lady
Hungerford and some others joyned with us in commen-
 ding his condition unto the Lord by hearty supplications. I
 left him well composed in his Spirit, resolving silently to sub-
 mit unto the good pleasure of God. Not long after he was
 inclined to sleep, and slumbered out the most of his time
 till the next morning when he fell asleep in Jesus, with whom
 I am confident he is now in glory. His person was much lo-
 ved, his life was much desired, and his death is much la-
 mented

mented. And truly there is great cause of lamentation for the losse of him, which doth extend to very many. His three Sisters have lost an only brother, and their Family hath lost the only Heir-male to continue the name in that Line. The Honourable Lady with whom he lived hath lost a dear kinsman and companion; and all persons who were acquainted with him have lost a faithfull friend. His Tenants have lost a good Landlord, who designed this as an addition to his other kindeneses, to settle a soul-saving Ministry amongst them: The Countrey hath lost a pillar, and the godly Ministers in the Neighbourhood have lost a Patron. The only way to sweeten this rod is by seeking the sanctification of it, and the only course to make up all the breaches which are made by his death, is to come unto Christ and to live upon him in whom all fulnesse dwelleth: For which end the Sermon now preached may prove profitable, through the blessing of the Almighty.

F I N I S.
